

## CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

## INFORMATION REPORT

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SOURCE: [REDACTED]

1. The Coptic-Catholic Patriarch of Egypt, Monsignor Markus Khazam, is trying to unite all religious forces in a movement against Communism throughout the Near and Middle East. He hopes to unite in this effort the Orthodox Churches, the Coptic Churches, the Ulemas, and the Sheikhs of the great Moslem University of al-Azhar.
2. Khazam began with contacts with the Orthodox Patriarchs of Antioch, Jerusalem, and Alexandria, all of whom he found somewhat reserved toward his proposals. Then he tried the Oecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, His Holiness Athenagoras. Athenagoras has hitherto adopted a prudent and patient attitude toward the Russian Church, fearing that a more vigorous attitude would merely provoke a schism within the Orthodox Churches.
3. In spite of this restraint, the Coptic Patriarch can count on the support of the Middle Eastern Orthodox Churches against Communism, though they may not declare themselves openly. The Moslem religious leaders have asserted that they do not mix in politics, but that they wish the Coptic Patriarch success.

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